

Democratic Northwest.

Views on Religion.

Mr. Editor:—It is almost universally acknowledged that true religion is of vast importance, and yet there is a multiplicity of opinions in relation to what constitutes true religion. I will not attempt to enumerate the number of the different sects that claim to have a knowledge of what constitutes a true religion, but suffice it to say that there are a great many. But in these brief remarks I do not design to wage war on some in contrast with any principles differing from my own. I have due respect for all honest thinkers, and very great respect for all honest doers.

I think that every rational man or woman will readily concede that the true principles of religion can be summed up in a very few words. When enquiry was made of the Lord by a young man, the reply was: thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, soul, might, mind and strength, and thy neighbor as thyself. But again, thou shalt deal justly, love mercy and walk humbly before thy God. St. James says that pure and undefiled religion is this: to visit the widows in their affliction, and keep yourselves unspotted from the world.

But to the subject. I believe that a man's love is his life, and if this love consists of goodness and truth, God and the neighbor, it constitutes heaven; and hence the kingdom of heaven is within you. The opposite love is that of falsity and evil, self and the world, which constitutes hell. The question might arise, how are we to judge in these matters? I answer, judge righteously; do men gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles? If I should hire a man to work in my garden for a certain sum per day, and he should be tardy in the morning, half or three-fourths of an hour and should slight his work, and should enquire of every person passing by what time of the day it was, and should come to the house every half hour after a drink, is it not righteous judgment that such a man is not worthy of his hire?

But again. If you have dealings with a man and you discover that he is trying to deceive by fraudulent pretensions, I think you would not hesitate to say that such a man was not worthy of your confidence. But I see I am wandering. I firmly believe that religion at the present day consists mainly of an educated religion; for as your father's did, so do you. To shun sin because it is sin, is one thing, and to shun it for fear of reputation or the law, is another thing. An external appearance is one thing and an internal quite another thing. Mouth talk is one thing and the disposition of the heart quite another.

I think it very important that the true principles of religion should be based upon true doctrine. I think also that that doctrine is based upon the principle of a God given rationality, and seen in truths inherent light. What more pernicious doctrine could have been devised, or what more cruel notion in regard to God could have been conceived, than that any of the human race are damned by a positive predetermined decree. How cruel is a faith which maintains that the Lord, who is love itself, and mercy itself, can cause a multitude of men to be born and devoted to hell; or that thousands and tens of thousands are brought into the world with an inevitable curse on their heads, being in fact, born devils and satans; and that in His infinite divine wisdom he never did provide some method of deliverance for those who lead good lives and acknowledge the being of a God, that they might escape everlasting fire and punishment. Is not the Lord the Creator of all, and the Savior of all? And does not he alone guide and govern all his creatures, not desiring the death of any? What then can be believed or conceived more inhuman than that whole tribes of nations and people should, under his auspices and intention, be delivered up by a positive predetermined decree as a prey to the devil, and to glut his voracious appetite? How is it possible that any one possessing any share of sound reason, should conclude in favor of predestination? Must not that doctrine necessarily give rise to cruel notions respecting God, and to the most shocking opinions respecting religion?

Choked to Death by an Oyster.

A strange accident happened last week in Jackson, Mississippi. Thomas J. Wharton, Jr., deputy United States revenue collector, son of Judge T. J. Wharton of that place, and W. H. Bailey, son of the late Judge Bailey, of Canton, entered a restaurant and Warton called for some oysters. Soon after the table was spread Warton, holding up a large oyster on his fork's prongs, good naturedly remarked: "This is the kind of an oyster Walker Brooks choked to death on." "Well, Tom, I hope that one will not hurt you," as pleasantly replied Mr. Bailey, and scarcely had these words escaped his lips when, without other converse, he arose and walked to a back entrance. A waiter standing near the door cried out in alarm: The gentleman is choking! Wharton jumped up and ran to him, and after trying all the conventional remedies of relief known to him without avail, rushed wildly into the street in search of a physician. Before his return however Mr. Bailey's life had passed beyond the recall of human skill. —St. Louis Post Dispatch.

When Alexander the Great Orsini beat the man who threw the fatal Orsini bomb at Alexander II. he himself was wounded by it, and died without giving his name.

NOT IN THE BILLS.

THE TERRIBLE TRAGEDY IN A FRENCH THEATRE.

Hundreds of People Crushed and Burned to Death.

NICE, March 24.—3 A. M.—Up to this hour 39 bodies have been recovered from the ruins of the Italian Opera House, destroyed by fire last night. It is feared that many more lives are lost. The fire commenced soon after the curtain had risen for the performance of "Lucia de Lammermoor." The subscribers for the orchestra stalls and boxes of the grand tier had mostly not arrived. A majority of the victims belong to the working class.

Shortly after the fire began the gas exploded, and the house was plunged into complete darkness. A scene of terror and dismay ensued which beggars description. A detachment of sailors from the squadron in the harbor arrived on the scene and displayed great gallantry in rescuing people and combating the fire, which was subdued toward 10 o'clock. Strakosch, the impresario, was slightly hurt. Signora Bianca Di Donati, one of the leading artists, made her way from the stage to the street in safety. One entire family of five persons and another family of three persons are known to have perished. Relief subscription for the sufferers have been opened throughout Nice. The regatta here has been postponed and the value of the prizes to have been contested for will be contributed towards the relief of the distressed.

NEW YORK, March 24.—A dispatch from Nice says: The holocaust at the opera house last evening was caused by a gas explosion at the back of the stage, which set fire to the scenery. The flames spread with alarming rapidity and soon enveloped the gas metre. The supply of gas being cut off, the body of the house was soon plunged in darkness. The crowd pressed madly toward the limited means of exit. The audience was large, and in the panic hundreds were thrown and trampled under-foot.

Those who endeavored to extricate the people hopelessly jammed between the doorway and passages describe the scene as terrible. The shrieks of the wounded, mingled with the cries of those in the galleries whose every means of escape was cut off. Mme Donati, the prima donna, was saved, but the tenor, basso, baritone, and a number of chorus singers were burned. Up to midnight 150 bodies were extricated from the ruins. A man who escaped from the upper gallery by jumping, declares that, with perhaps a dozen exceptions, every person in this part of the house burned. Some sailors were lost. A number of American and English visitors rendered general assistance in saving lives.

THE SCENE IN TOWN is indescribable: One lady whose husband was burned to death committed suicide. As usual complaints respecting the defective means of escape and the water supply. Although the Mediterranean washes the shore at the foot of the walls of the theatre no water could be obtained when wanted and the beautiful Opera House was a complete wreck.

AT NEW YORK. Col. Mapleson, Signor Arditi, Signor Monti and Mme. Gerster's husband at the rehearsal to-day, in the Academy of Music in this city, were much depressed by the news of the terrible calamity at Nice. Donadi sang in New York with Albany some years ago. The tenor was known to be Devilliers, a Frenchman, 35 years of age and not remarkable for any excellence on the lyric stage. The baritone was Carbone, and the basso a Pole named Miller, who had enjoyed a continental reputation for many years. He was an old man, over 60 perhaps. Signor Monti knew him well and was much affected by the report of the injuries he had sustained. Ferdinand Strakosch is believed to have been the impresario of the troupe; Signor Bolognini, manager of the theatre.

THE THEATRE. Charles Mapleson said the theatre cost in the neighborhood of \$350,000, and was built without architectural design. Outside the walls were brick chimneys, blocks of stone interlarded, for no seeming purpose further than to make the structure appear unsightly. The interior looked very pretty, with its ornamented walls and ceilings of dazzling gilded work but it was all "grimace."

The star there this season was Miss Rosina Isore, who last year made a signal success in London. She is a protegee of the Baroness Rothschild. Her parents reside in St. Louis, Mo.

Origin of the Bang.

America has so seldom given Europe a new fashion in return for the many it has received, that a great deal of quiet comfort has been taken out of the supposition that the feminine custom of "banging" the hair was borrowed from the squaws on our Western plains. According to the New York Herald, the feminine Indian is a marvel of hideousness, while her bang, when she has one, lends to her ugliness an air of irredeemable animism and abject depravity; but if only becoming devices were fashionable there would be very little new to record in India journals or to display at churches and theaters. It now appears, however, that the bang is not peculiar to the American Indians, it being quite common among the savages of New Zealand. This fact being admitted, the method of the advent of fashion in England may easily be surmised. Returned convicts brought this latest sweet thing in hair to their lady friends, who were glad to adopt it for the very reason, probably, that New Zealand's belles did it—saved them the trouble of combing and arranging their front hair. How the fashion spread to the higher orders need not be asked, for whatever is wild, peculiar and unnatural in woman's appearance may always be safely trusted to make its way in the world.

Bank Intimidation.

Mr. Voorhees offered the following resolution in the United States Senate yesterday:

"Resolved, That the hostile attitude assumed by the National Banks toward refunding the National debt at a low rate of interest and present attempt to dictate the legislation of Congress on the subject are contrary to the best interests of the people, and well calculated to excite their alarm for the future."

The Republican Senators Morrill, Ferry and Conkling contended that the resolution was in the nature of legislative business and not in order in this Executive session of the Senate. The resolution was, therefore, withheld for a day, till the precedents could be examined and a decision reached upon this point. The resolution is not at this moment before the Senate, but is before the country nevertheless.

The resolution, as offered by Mr. Voorhees, while it describes a condition of things that may well kindle the attention and forebodings of the country, falls short of the complete description of the alarming fact. The resolution expresses an attempt on the part of the National Banks to dictate the legislation of Congress. Congress is one of the three great departments of the Federal Government, which is made up of the Legislative, Judiciary and Executive departments. The resolution might well have declared that the National Banks had not only attempted to dictate the legislation of Congress, the action of one of the three great departments of the Government, but had succeeded in dictating the action of the Executive Department of the Government. Is it a fact that two of the great departments of our Federal system are already within the control of the National Banks?

The Democratic party in the last Congress was not animated by any spirit of malicious hostility to the National Banks. It made no attack upon them. It robbed them of no rights, and sought to rob them of none. The Democrats of the Forty-sixth Congress passed a Funding Bill, which would have saved the tax-payers of the United States more than \$15,000,000 in annual interest; and the principal upon which this interest is a large sum of money. The National Banking Act provides that the National Banks shall deposit in the Treasury of the Government, bonds of some kind as security for their circulation. The Democratic Congress proposed, in order to place the new issue of bonds, that those bonds of new issue should be deposited by the banks as such security. The National Banks at best, or at the worst, received the interest on the bonds they deposited in some sense as a premium for accepting the privilege of loaning their circulating notes. National Bank stock in this city is selling at two hundred.

It is plain that no enormous injury could have been inflicted upon National Banks by directing that they should receive 2 per cent. instead of 3 per cent. for accepting the privilege of loaning their debts. The National Bank interest is not languishing. The Funding Bill was in the interest of economy—in the interest of the people. It was framed to save to the tax-payers of the country the interest on five hundred millions of dollars. This was a great measure of economy. It was a measure in the interest of the tax-payers in a Republic of fifty millions of people. A few National Banks threatened a financial disturbance by surrendering their circulation. It was not the Congress, but the banks that made a financial disturbance, but, as the resolution of Mr. Voorhees declares, there was an attempt on the part of the banks to dictate the legislation of Congress upon this subject concerning which the fifty millions of people in the country presumably have some interest, and in the Republic the tax-payers are as numerous as bankers. This at tempt, unsuccessful in a Democratic Congress, was successful at the other end of the avenue. The Republican Executive surrendered to the dictation of a very few of the two-thousand National Banks, which are the recipients of dividends derived from Government privilege. The bondholders, the National bankers, are few; the tax-payers and the people are many. The resolution of Senator Voorhees mildly expresses the indignation of a people numbering fifty millions at the attempted dictation of a system of harmonious corporations whose stockholders are few. Half a dozen National Banks rule the country at the close of the Forty-sixth Congress; and there are two thousand National Banks in the United States. The Republic does not intend to alarm the National Banks; but the National Banks should not alarm the Republic.—*Enquirer*.

A Spectre Light.

One of the most singular events that ever arose in the experience of railroad men, came across the engineer, fireman, and brakeman on the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific express which left Davenport for Council Bluffs the evening of Thursday.

The train pulled out of this city, James Raynor conductor, at 7:10 o'clock. The weather was bitter cold that night, it will be remembered, the mercury falling to 15 degrees below zero. Nothing unusual happened until after the train had gone from Marengo at 11 o'clock—and about three miles west of that town, the engineer, J. R. Wilkinson, saw in the distance ahead a locomotive headlight, and he said to his fireman, Dave Myers, "Dave, what on earth is that train on the track on our time for?" Dave looked ahead and there was the headlight sure enough, and Wilkinson immediately

closed his throttle, applied the air-brakes and stopped. The brakemen jumped off to ascertain the cause of the halt, and they too, "saw the headlight coming. The engineer and fireman watched the distant glare a moment, and it quivered exactly as a headlight does when viewed at a distance, from a fast approaching engine, and the track for a long distance in front of it glistened like silver in its light.

The conductor did not get off to see the light, and so missed the sight.

But as there was a train ahead, with an apparent right to the track, the express train backed to Marengo in short order. There a telegram was sent to the train dispatcher at Des Moines, informing him of the unexpected train, and asking for instructions. His answer: "No train between Marengo and Brooklyn—go ahead." But the engineer reports seeing a train! "Impossible—there is no wild train on that section, and regulars are all right—go ahead, I tell you." And again the train pulled out of Marengo—but the strange headlight was seen no more. To those who believed it when the train stopped it was as real as any light they ever saw, and all were as certain that there was a locomotive with a train coming toward them as they lived.

It is now believed that a sort of mirage or reflection of Wilkinson's headlight was produced at the place by some freak of the elements in that clear, cold, frosty air, and that this was what Mr. Wilkinson, Dave Myers, and the brakemen saw. It was real enough to send the train speeding back to Marengo for instructions. Mayhap it was a spectre train, of which there are several in railroad lore.

Rank.

From general observation it seems that a man is ranked according to his wealth and standing in a community. If he has a comfortable income he is a Major, but if he possesses a bank or runs a half-dozen plantations all letters addressed to him will have the prefix Colonel to his name. When a man looks up as a Commodore, he is a fat bondholder. He owns two or three railroads and very nearly all the people who has business transaction with him. No one has the least idea how many officers there are in this country until he travels abroad. Not long ago an observing man, while on a trip through Georgia, was invited to a fashionable dinner party, and while there was introduced to sixteen Majors, ten Colonels and eight Judges. He was nothing but a plain Mister, and as he gazed at the notables seated around him, he felt like a more dyspeptic in this world. Life suddenly grew gloomy and dull, and the more he thought of his humble position the more melancholy he became. He wanted to seek some dark secluded spot and there bay the moon until some one mistook him for a dog and shot him with a gun. Sad and listless he roamed about, and when his heart was sinking with despair he was presented to a Mr. Brown. "Are you plain Mr. Brown?" he inquired, as the tears welled up in his eyes. "Yes, sir; and I am glad to meet you." "Friend, brother," was all he could say as he fell on the other's neck and wept. Brown was verily on oasis in a desert of dignitaries, and life was bright once more.—*New Orleans Times*.

Facts for the Curious.

The chamois, bounding over the mountain, are imbedded in no small degree to a species of pheasants. The leader of the herd acts as a sentinel, for as soon as it gets sight of a man it whistles-upon hearing which the chamois knowing the hunters to be near, sets out at full speed.

The twinkling of the stars is generally admitted to be due to the moisture in the upper air. M. Montigny, in a paper published in *Les Météores*, holds that a very pronounced twinkle of the stars indicates either commotion in the upper regions of the atmosphere or a sudden fall of temperature there, thus denoting the conditions of an early appearance of bad weather.

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